

Child Protection Foundation Training

Vicarious Trauma

Managing the occupational hazard of
working with traumatized children
and families



Core Competencies

- ▶ To be able to define and develop an understanding of vicarious trauma
- ▶ To be aware of your own Vicarious Trauma Profile
- ▶ To be aware of your own Resiliency Profile
- ▶ Develop an action plan that addresses your vicarious trauma profile

Your Brain on Child Protection



Long-term Outcomes

Reduced turnover, higher level of productivity over time, improved health for veteran workers, and better service to the children and families.

Burnout

- ▶ “Exhaustion of a practitioner’s mental and physical resources attributed to his or her prolonged and unsuccessful striving toward unrealistic expectations, internally or externally derived.”

(Azar, 2000)



Exposure to Trauma

- ▶ “The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet.”

(Remen, 1996)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOeQUwdAjE0>



Secondary Traumatic Stress

“It is the natural, consequent behavior and emotion resulting from knowledge about a traumatizing event experienced by another person and the stress resulting from helping or wanting to help a traumatized person.”

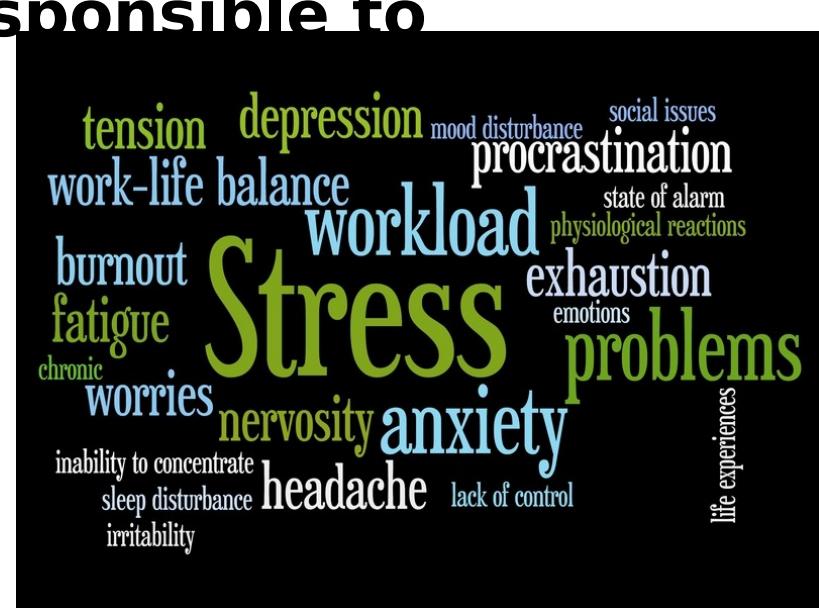
(The Cost of Justice: A Desk Manual on Vicarious Trauma, 2014)



Vicarious Trauma

“Vicarious trauma is the process of change that happens (to you) because you care about other people who have been hurt, and feel committed or responsible to help them.”

(Pearlman, 2008)



Understanding Vicarious Trauma

- ▶ There isn't always a direct connection between what happens, the event, and how a person is impacted or the level in which a person is traumatized.
- ▶ It is CUMULATIVE (Occurs over time).
- ▶ There may not be an end to it as it is based on a series of events and/or reactions. This differs from Secondary trauma, which can reach a conclusion as it is typically one event.
- ▶ Person-focused, not-symptom focused.

(Perlman)

Impact of Vicarious Trauma on Worldviews

- **Changes in spirituality** - changes in beliefs regarding meaning, purpose, causality, connection, hope, and faith
- **Changes in identity** - changes in the way you practice or think about your identity as a service provider, friend, or family member
- **Changes in beliefs related to major psychological needs** - beliefs regarding safety, control, trust, esteem, and intimacy

The Vicarious Trauma Risk Profile Score Sheet

Vicarious Trauma Risk Profile Score Sheet

Place an x in the appropriate box for each of the eight factors.

Risk							
9 High							
8							
7							
6 Average							
5							
4							
3 Low							
2							
1							
Factors Impacting Level Risk	Current Life Circumstances	Coping Styles	Work Environment	Trauma Knowledge	Spirituality and Meaning	Work Role	Personal History

Resiliency Profile

- ▶ Part 1: Looks at the conditions that research has shown helps people to be more resilient.
- ▶ Part 2: Looks at personal resiliency builders. Individual qualities that facilitate resiliency.

Creating YOUR Plan

- Level One: **Personal Acknowledgement**
- Level Two: **Insight Statement & Plan**
- Level Three: **An Affirmation**
- Level Four: **Risk Prevention Strategy One & Two**
- Level Five: **Past Success**
- Level Six: **Future Success**

Transformation Planning

- ▶ Moderate to severe Vicarious Trauma needs to be addressed with a different approach than prevention



Questions?

